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# Food and Home Notes

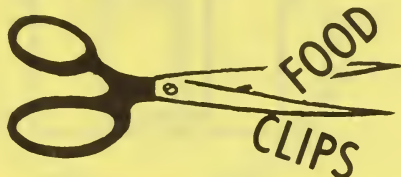
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Sirloins with a long, flat bone are slightly more tender than others -- and also have the largest portion of tenderloin, according to marketing specialists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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A single steak can easily serve five or more people -- but for bone-in steaks allow about 8 to 10 ounces per person for generous servings.

\* \* \*

Fresh pork sausage is made from ground pork blended with spices, and other seasonings. Link sausages may be fresh or smoked -- in casings or skinless.

\* \* \*

Cooking time? It varies with intensity of heat produced -- a roast cooked on an outdoor rotisserie may require a longer time to cook on a breezy day.

\* \* \*

## THERE'S A NEW LOOK COMING —in Bacon

If you've looked at a package of bacon lately, you may have noticed the new style "window" on the package. You can actually see the bacon inside.

Consumers have long complained to USDA about being unable to tell the lean-to-fat ratio of a slice of bacon in a package. Now, as a result of recently enacted regulations, you can see-through the "new" style window and select the leanest--or not--as you like it.

Windowed packages of sliced bacon must show at least 70% of the length of a representative strip of bacon, and the window must be at least 1-1/2 inches wide--the better to see through--according to USDA. The old style packages frequently allowed only those lead edges to be seen through the cellophane "window."

## FOOD PRESERVATION SERIES

A wide variety of fruits and vegetables may find their way to your table as pickle products--adding spice to meals or snacks. Skillful selection and blending of spices, sugar, and vinegar with fruits and vegetables give crisp, firm texture and pungent, sweet-sour flavor.

### Basic steps --

1. Use only good quality ingredients, firm, not too ripe fruits or vegetables.
2. Use vinegar that is high grade cider or white distilled of 4 to 6% acidity. Strength of vinegar is usually shown on the label. Use pure granulated salt. Alum and lime are not needed if quality ingredients and up to date procedures are used. Do not dilute the vinegar, unless the recipe so specifies.
3. Use tested recipes. Measure or weigh all ingredients.
4. Use proper equipment. For heating pickling liquids, do not use utensils of copper, brass, galvanized, or iron; these metals may react with acids or salts and cause undesirable color changes in the pickles or form undesirable compounds. For fermenting or brining, use stone, glass, or unchipped enamel-lined containers.
5. Use a water-bath canner for processing jars of pickle products. Any large metal container with a close-fitting lid, deep enough to allow for one to two inches of water above the tops of the jars, plus extra space for water to bubble during boiling; and a wire or wood rack to keep jars from touching.

HEAT PROCESSING is recommended for all pickle products, including sauerkraut. Adequate heating is best achieved in a boiling water bath. Such treatment destroys organisms that cause spoilage, and inactivates enzymes that may affect flavor, color, and texture.





## The "How-To" On Making Pickles, Jellies, and Jams at Home

SPOILAGE? Always be on the alert for signs of spoilage. Before opening a jar, examine it closely, for leakage or bulging lid. When a jar is opened, look for spurting liquid, mild, unusual odor, off-color, softness, or slippery feel. If there is any doubt, do not taste; dispose of contents so that they cannot be eaten by humans or animals and then boil empty jars for 15 minutes.

### Problems with pickles?

Shriveling? It may result from too strong vinegar, sugar, or salt; overcooking or overprocessing.

Soft or slippery? Generally means microbial action has caused spoilage. This action may be caused by too little salt or acid, insufficient heating, moldy spices, improper brining, or seal not airtight.

Dark color? Ground spices or too much spice, iodized salt, overcooking, minerals in the water or use of iron utensils.

### Causes of spoilage in sauerkraut?

Softness -- not enough salt, too high temperatures during fermentation, air pockets caused by improper packing.

Pink color -- caused by yeast on the surface; these grow if there is too much salt, uneven distribution of salt, or if the kraut is improperly covered or weighted during fermentation.

Rotted -- occurs during fermentation when cabbage has not been covered sufficiently to exclude the air.

Dark -- unwashed or poorly trimmed cabbage, not enough juice to cover the cabbage, exposure to air, high temperatures, long storage.

## FAMILY RECREATION --- and Watershed Projects

Watershed lake developments are not new -- but they are now providing Americans with an easy answer to the "new" leisure living while also serving a very necessary purpose. Three states with watershed lake developments were recently studied to determine how they were being used and what benefits they provided for the surrounding communities. Nine out of ten families think the lakes and the quality of the facilities are just right, according to the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

If you don't live near a watershed lake development, you may wonder...what do they offer? Fishing is one of the most popular activities on Lake Fuqua's (Oklahoma) 1,500 acres. People come from a 300 mile radius to use it.

Another watershed project is located at Lake Charles, Arkansas. It is one of the most highly developed of the five lake parks -- it offers picnic areas, boat ramps, playground equipment, and campsites. It even has underground garbage cans. It also stores water for flooding several hundred acres in the Rainey Brake wildlife refuge every fall, giving migratory waterfowl a place to rest on their way south. Economically, the lake is credited as having benefited the region by nearly \$1.5 million because visitors spend well over \$500,000 in the area annually.

A new 12 page booklet "For the Fun of It...and Then Some" (PA 1060) was written by the Soil Conservation Service. Single copies are available for a limited time from the Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

NOTE: Additional information for the MEDIA and photographs (when applicable) may be obtained from: Shirley Wagener, Editor of Food and Home Notes, Room 535A, Office of Communication/Press Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Or telephone 202-447-5898.